

# CHARTING A NEW TOMORROW

## Frequently Asked Questions



### **Q: What does the Montana State Park strategic plan do?**

**A:** Montana State Parks is proud of its stewardship and the level of customer service it provides to park visitors. Historically, the park system and other outdoor recreational providers have lacked adequate funding and staffing levels needed to operate effectively. This plan seeks to close the gap between existing resources and the cost of providing high-quality visitor experience and services. This plan also identifies the need for additional revenues and new funding sources for all parks and recreational providers.

### **Q: How is this plan different from the 2014-2018 Montana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)?**

**A:** The SCORP provides guidance for recreation management and policy on city, county, state, and federal public lands. The SCORP is a foundation for the strategic plan, but the strategic plan sets goals and recommendations specific to state parks and recreation programs managed by Montana State Parks. The two plans are complementary but focus on recreation at different levels.

### **Q: What are the 3 key outcomes the strategic plan hopes to achieve?**

- A:**
1. Establish sustainable sources of funding to support a healthy state park system and other outdoor recreation.
  2. Create and foster strategic partnerships with other agencies and friends groups.
  3. Build an engaged constituency through awareness and recognition of Montana State Parks and outdoor recreation providers across the state.

### **Q: Does the strategic plan reduce the amount of public lands?**

**A:** Public lands will stay public. The strategic plan will look at existing state parks and determine if these lands can be most effectively managed by Montana State Parks or by other agencies and entities as city parks, county parks, state recreation areas, or historic sites.

### **Q: How does this plan address limited resources and staff?**

**A:** The plan will identify staffing and operational standards based on comparisons with other park systems in the northern Rocky Mountain region. The plan will also prioritize parks according to their significance, relevance, and accessibility. The Division will then redirect existing resources to bring management of the most significant sites up to those standards.

### **Q: How does the plan address Montana State Parks Grant programs?**

**A:** The plan recognizes the demand for recreational grant funding and the Division's leadership role in working with communities and user groups to improve recreational opportunities around the state. However, the demand for grants funding far exceeds the available grant money. The strategic plan seeks to create new, sustainable funding and grant opportunities for city, county and other outdoor recreation providers to better meet these needs.

### **Q: How does the plan address tourism**

**A:** Montana State Parks is proud of its role in supporting Montana's multi-billion dollar tourism industry. This plan seeks to strengthen levels of service and stewardship at flagship parks to provide enriching visitor experiences that reinforce Montana as a tourist destination.

### **Q: Does this plan include hunting and fishing license fees or increases?**

**A:** No, this plan does not address hunting and fishing license fees. Montana State Parks does NOT receive funding from the sale of Montana hunting or fishing licenses.

### **Q: How can I get involved?**

**A:** You can get involved by sharing your comments on the draft strategic plan with Montana State Parks. You may also get involved by creating new or joining existing state park friends groups, or by volunteering at your favorite state parks.

### **Q: Is there a process to follow up the plan?**

**A:** Parks board will be considering the plan at their meeting on December 17, 2014. If approved, there will be opportunities for public engagement and dialogue throughout the implementation process. Montana's state parks belong to the people and your engagement matters.